

Essay-

Progress of Medicine.

Presented to the Faculty of the  
Homoeopathic Medical College  
of

Pennsylvania

February 1<sup>st</sup> 1856  
By

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Progress is the motto of  
our time. There is no art  
or science yet known which is  
not at the present time progress-  
ing with greater rapidity than  
at any other time since the  
creation of the world.

Never was there a time when more  
strong minded enthusiastic men  
were delving into the hidden mysteries  
of science to search out some new prob-  
lem by which to immortalize their  
own name and to benefit mankind.

Let us for a few moments glance  
at the Science of Medicine Its Progress  
from our first knowledge to the  
present time. Medicine was first

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practiced by the Priests among the  
Egyptians as far as our knowledge extends,  
although its origin is an unveiled  
mystery. The first practice of  
Medical Science was by means of  
incantations, the whole effect being  
produced through the influence of  
the imagination (at the present day  
ascribed to the faith of the patient).

The little knowledge gained was care-  
fully cloaked in obscurity simply en-  
joining cleanliness and rest. We  
learn that among the early Greeks were  
those who made pretensions in the healing  
art among whom was Hippocrates who first  
caused medicine to be regarded as a science  
though one Chiron is accredited for introdu-  
cing the healing art to his countrymen



thirteen hundred years before Christ. Aesculapius a student of Chiron was the first to make medicine an exclusive study. The descendants of Aesculapius were priests in the temples and the temples were used as hospital where the sick were brought, where the priests performed certain incantations, prescribed cleanliness, rest and simplicity of diet, to which must be ascribed their curative agencies as at this time no internal remedies were given. For several centuries succeeding Aesculapius Medical Science made not the least Progress. Temples were erected in honor of him and he was deified as the God of Medicine. But this science was destined not to rest here for other selfish and sagacious men arose who desired

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to turn the whole skill to their own praise.  
The temples Eos and Enidos become rivals.  
Then commenced a division to remain for  
ever a division which sank deeper and  
deeper till it struck a fountain which sent  
forth a stream which will eventually wash  
away all former Prejudices and narrow con-  
victed views and the world shall rise up and  
call it blessed. But to return. One assumed  
to be philosophical and unite reason with  
experience while the other was guided solely  
by facts and observations. And we find at  
the present day many physicians who  
follow where theory leads regardless of the  
slanders and railings of easily prejudiced  
and superstitious community while yet  
there is another set of practitioners (if we  
may so call them) who are merely routine



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practitioners without any particle of pretension  
or any rational system. They mount  
their hobby and ride o'er hill and dale o'er  
land or sea, hot or cold it's all the same,  
they neither turn to right or left and consider  
it sacrilege even to turn their eye for  
once upon any method except their own.

What a Glory to the world would it be were  
such practitioners all concentrated in one  
and he go down to the grave with the curse  
of Macbeth upon him "No Son of his suc-  
ceeding." In the sixth century before  
Christ lived Pythagoras the pioneer of a  
class of students of general information  
and philosophical mind who gave much atten-  
tion to the investigation of the structure and  
functions and diseases of the human body.  
he prosecuted the study of comparative anatomy

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by the dissection of animals. Among  
his most illustrious followers was Democri-  
tus, who is regarded as the first who ever  
attempted the dissection of a human sub-  
ject. One of the most sagacious  
observing and industrious men that ever  
lived was Hippocrates, the Boan Sage.  
entitled the Father of Medicine brought  
up among the Asclepiadae in the temple  
of Cos. He regarded fire as the primitive  
source of all matter the four elements  
being a result of the collision and combination  
of its ever moving particles. He contended  
there was a general presiding principle of  
vitality for the whole body and a special  
vital power for each organ. And if we  
substitute Electricity for his fire and the  
modern phrase organic sensibility and



special centre of organic perception for  
his nature and power he would harmon-  
ize well with many Physiologists of  
the present day. He maintained that the  
fluids were the primary seat of disease and  
was never disputed till within the present  
century now the division is nearly equal.  
By his system the four elements Earth,  
Air, Fire and Water with their four elements  
Hot, cold, moist and dry give rise to the  
four humors of the body a Blood, Phlegm, Bile  
and Black Bile and these tend to produce the  
four temperaments. With him originated  
the doctrine of crises. He noticed that  
fevers had a tendency to terminate on  
certain days, a doctrine which at this day  
by many is discarded. He used vegetable  
remedies only. Subsequent to the age of



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Hippocrates Medical Science again remained stationary for several centuries, except now and then a distinguished name among whom was Dr Chrysippus, who discarded bleeding and active purgatives and therefore was regarded as the first irregular Physician. But, many shall there be who shall go on do likewise. Among other names were those of Plato and Aristotle, the latter wrote the first book on anatomy and physiology. Next came the Alexandrian school founded by the Ptolemies at Alexandria, three hundred years before Christ. The most famous of its professors were Erasistratus and Herophilus who dissected bodies of criminals obtained from government. The former having been a student of Chrysippus entertained his views in regard to bleeding

and purgatives, the latter paid particular attention to the actions of the heart and was the first to describe the different kinds of pulse. About this time the practice of Physicians and Surgeons became distinct vocations and about this time the great division already mentioned occurred which divided Medical men into two sects the Dogmatists and Empirics.

After the decline of Grecian Literature (about eight hundred years before Christ) medicine made no progress for a long time. During the warlike days of Rome she was six hundred years without a physician who made the healing art a profession.

Plagues and other epidemics were attempted to be stayed by such rites as would propitiate the offended deities. About two hundred



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years before Christ the first regular physician by the name of Aesculapius established himself in Rome. At first he was revered and applauded but so severe was his practice and his results so unsuccessful that he was banished from the land and the practice prohibited by law. About a century after Aesculapius a pupil of Epicurus being unsuccessful in the teaching Rhetoric turned his attention to medicine and being very mild and cautious he acquired great popularity. He was the first to divide diseases into acute and chronic. His pupil Theriason founded the third sect eclectic, he also divided remedies into astringents and relaxants. A half century later arose Theriasus a self sufficient practitioner who by great swelling and abundant cunning acquired great reputation and wealth.

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He treated all predecessors with the greatest contempt even burning their books discarding their practice and taking upon himself the modest title of Conqueror of Physicians. Instead of assisting nature he introduced a new system called metasyneisis producing an entire change of the state of the body. This theory absurd as it was promulgated by its fabricator for no other purpose than to get gold and fame was adopted by subsequent medical writers and is now the chief corner stone of the so styled Regular Scientific Practice. During the first two centuries (after Christ) other divisions were made the most prominent of which were the Pneumatics and Electrics. The Pneumatic taught that the body was composed of solids fluids and spirits.



The most eminent <sup>writer</sup> was Aetacus.

The most celebrated of the Eclectics was Archigenes. His writings were obscure and chimerical yet he acquired great popularity undoubtedly more indebted to his unintelligible <sup>writings</sup> than any other circumstance of his fame. About this time was the first Pharmacopeia established and a compound theriac formed consisting of sixty three ingredients the most essential of which and that from which its name was derived was the dried flesh of vipers. This nostrum was prescribed by regular physicians for almost every known disease and retained in the Pharmacopeias till within the present century - even the cod liver oil of our day has not been a greater hobby. Of the history of Galen we shall say but little he was a

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Roman practitioner living about the third century. He discarded most former works except those of Hippocrates and relying upon his own skill and knowledge. About this time the Roman Empire began to decline and for two or three centuries we have no record except of a few Oribasius of the fourth and Aetius of the fifth and Paulus of the sixth centuries who wrote mere commentaries on the works of Galen. About the middle of the seventh century Paulus died which terminated the Greek School of Medicine. From the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries the practice of medicine was mainly in the hands of the monks whose healing resources were mainly magical art and astrological superstitions. With them the science of Chemistry or



Alchemy was assiduously applied the result of which was to introduce many chemical preparations into the materia medica. The first school to grant diplomas was at this period the Neapolitan of Salerno. About the thirteenth century the study of Anatomy was prosecuted by dissections and in the thirteenth century was founded the college of Physicians and Surgeons at London. Next appeared upon the stage the prince of Empirics Paracelsus by name whom the whole medical world denounce as a base impudent unprincipled charlatan, yet to whom the same medical world are more indebted for present system of allopathy.

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drugging than to all other physicians  
that have ever lived. It is to him  
we owe the introduction of the Mercurial  
and Antimonial practice which con-  
stitutes the great strength of the  
popular materia medica. This is  
the great foundation stone on which  
rests the present self styled Regular  
Scientific Practice. Let this founda-  
tion be taken from them and  
it would be like a house built  
upon the sand the first storm of dis-  
ease which sweeps over our land  
would sink it in lasting oblivion  
and its advocates would be scattered  
like sheep without a shepherd.  
His imitators style him the Quick  
Silver Quack and discord his theory—



neither can we uphold him conceiv-  
ing as we do that he introduced a sys-  
tem of practice that has carried thousands  
to an untimely grave. He was  
born in Switzerland in 1493 was  
a vain and pompous man styling  
himself Aesculap, Phillippus, Paracelsus  
Theophrastus, Bombast de Hohenheim.  
By bold pretension and a few lucky  
adventure he became celebrated. He  
introduced counter irritation. He  
removed a pain from the heel to  
the toes which cured the former but  
caused a permanent stiffness of the  
latter. The injury was not lasting  
for the patient soon died of Apoplexy.  
During the seventeenth century the  
doctrine of Hippocrates became the pre-

vailing medical philosophy. Anatomy made rapid progress. Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood. Asselli, Rudbeck, and Bartholin traced out the absorbent system and Malpighi Hooke and others explained the structure and functions of the lungs. Boyle disengaged Chemistry from its surrounding mystery and explained its true province, not the manufacture of solid gold and liquid nostrums, but, an investigation into the change of properties which bodies experience in their actions upon each other. But we must pass over many names and systems among which are Vanhelmont the vitalist Hoffman the solidist also Boerhave Haller and Cullen. we have

also the fermentationists, the Chemical, Anatomical, Mathematical the Metaphysical, the Semianimists &c. all of which we must pass over.

Moreover we might enumerate a long catalogue whose writings are the standard works of the present days among whom we find the names of Watson, Wood, Bell, Stokes, Ferguson, Liston, Druitt, Wilson, Dunglison, and many others of the present day whose writings serve only to involve the medical world in perplexity their discordant voices mingling like so many lights flickering in the distance serving only to dazzle our eyes and darken our pathway. But while the dim lights were twinkling and reflecting and rebounding



with beclouded lustre conveying only  
confusion through our land there  
arose in the east a small but  
bright light, a light which borrowed  
no ray from surrounding bodies -  
a light pure and bright of itself  
growing stronger and stronger  
shining upon the heads of wise men  
guiding and directing them till it  
shall illumine the whole world and  
reclaim them from the dark and  
thorny paths they have so long beaten.  
But, as their lights grow dim and  
are soon to be extinguished forever,  
let us extend to them a helping hand  
assist them down the last declivity,  
place them on a foundation which is  
sure grounded on the principles of

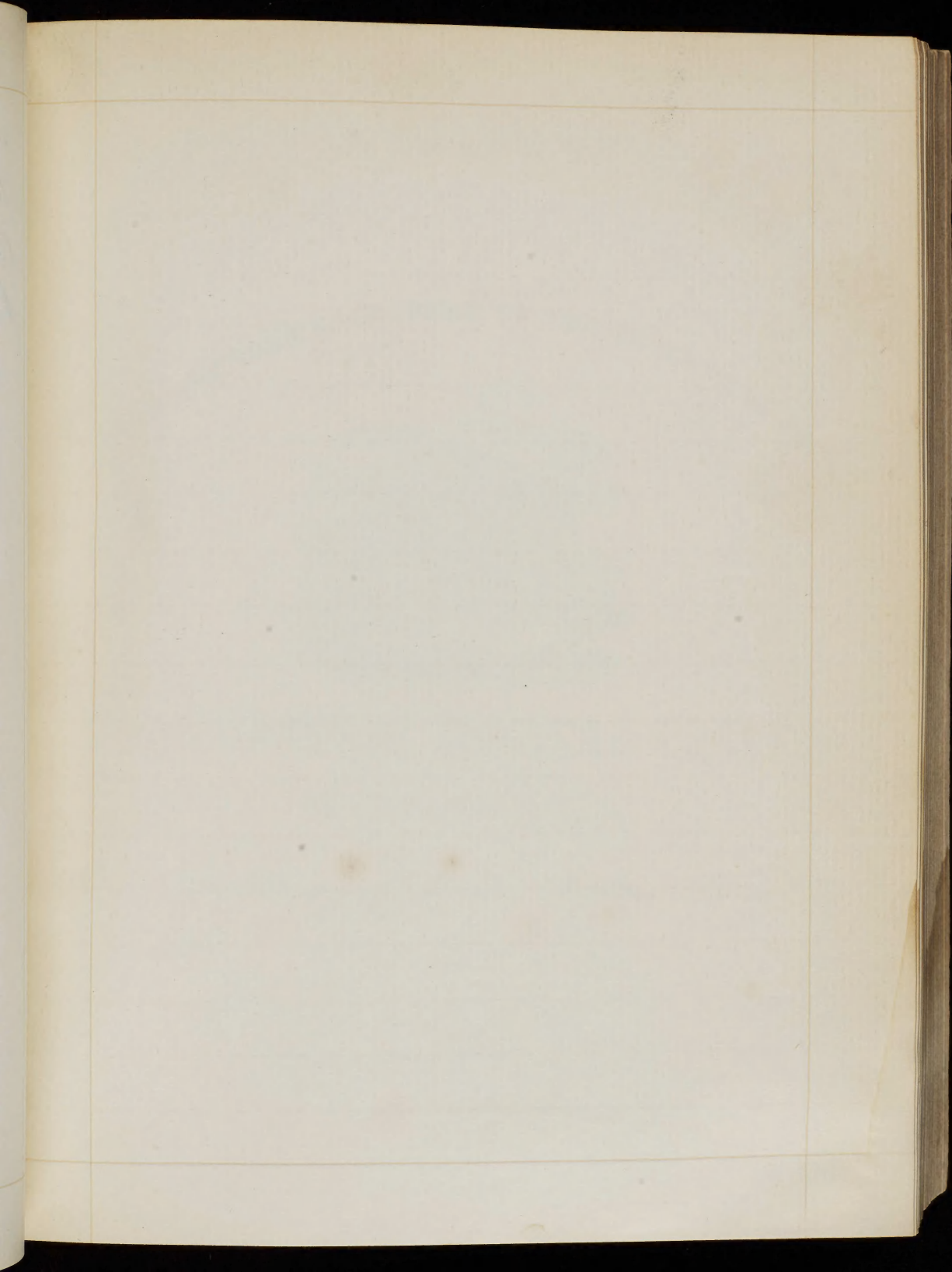
nature and lightest by that light  
which shines with no borrowed rays  
where all is purity and cleanliness.  
Then may they truly say "their last  
days are their best." Set us  
for a few moments investigate  
this new theory. Samuel Hahnemann  
was born in Germany in  
1755 and pursued the study and  
practice of medicine but being  
dissatisfied with the operations of cer-  
tain remedies as undoubtedly many  
had before him he then commenced  
investigations and experiment in  
Medical Science till at last he hit  
upon the true principle *similia  
similibus curantur*. Although  
true as his theory now seems he

was discarded by his country men  
driven from his native country  
and former friends, obliged to flee  
to a strange land and strange people  
yet being a strong and ardent lover  
of science ever keeping his eye on  
the true principle he pursued his  
investigations with untiring zeal  
though opposed by a jealous people  
yet they could raise no barrier  
which he did not surmount nor  
any obstacle which he did not throw  
aside but he was not destined to  
be alone forever, for soon others began  
to gather around him and his  
doctrine spread throughout the land  
with such power that the Eastern  
Continent could hold it no longer.



it sprang aboard a vessel bound  
for our continent and landed  
upon our peaceful shore in  
1829 first to the disgust and con-  
tempt of medical men but as  
it began to spread they began to  
be alarmed and it soon spread  
consternation through their ranks  
for they saw it was an army dread-  
ful and with banners. and daily  
could be found numbers collected  
together devising means by which  
to extirpate the monster "humbug"  
from our land. But Alas,  
they were too late for already  
three thousand practitioners  
are daily passing through our  
land on their errands of

mercy ever bearing before them  
the motto *Similia Similibus*  
*Curantur* now, *Similia*  
*Similibus Curantur* forever.





IN TEXAS ON

Malaria

RECEIVED IN THE FACULTY OF THE



HOMOEOPATHIC MEDICAL COLLEGE  
OF PENNSYLVANIA

In the hands of J. Henry Hughes, M.D.

By Henry Hughes, M.D.  
of the Faculty of the College